

November 15, 2023

THE NEXUS

NEWSLETTER FOR THE IDAHO LIBRARY COMMUNITY

2023 Tax Credit for Contributions Fact Sheet

The fact sheet for 2023 tax credit for contributions to public libraries is available:

<https://libraries.idaho.gov/about/fact-sheets/>.

Individuals and corporations that contribute to libraries are eligible for tax savings. Idaho Code section 63-3029A allows individuals or corporations to take a tax credit for monetary charitable contributions made to public libraries, library districts, and the Idaho Commission for Libraries.

Donations of goods or services do not qualify.



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<https://libraries.idaho.gov>

ICfL Idaho
Commission
for Libraries

ICfL Fall Board Tour

The five-member Idaho Board of Library Commissioners, along with seven Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) staff members, traveled to northern Idaho at the end of September to learn more about the many ways libraries are serving their communities. The team visited 10 locations:

Post Falls Middle School

Librarian Lindsey, who also serves River City Middle School, showed the visitors around the revitalized space. Both schools received \$5,000 School Library Access Mini Grants from the ICfL to purchase library books this school year.



Post Falls



Pinehurst

Plummer Public Library

The group explored the library's regional history collection and discussed the unique needs of homeschool families in the community. They also met Plummer Mayor Christopher Dohrman.



Community Library Network (CLN)

The group met members of the library district's leadership, board, and area legislators during a tour of CLN's Post Falls location. Seeing a courier drop in-person and hearing a variety of perspectives was important for the Board of Library Commissioners. The following day, the group visited the Pinehurst branch, another of CLN's seven locations.

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St. Maries Public Library

At St. Maries Public, the group joined in a celebration with **Benewah County Free Library District's** Tri-Community Library leadership. Both libraries were recently awarded \$500,000 Library Facilities Improvement Grants, and everyone was excited to share their project plans. St. Maries will utilize funding to transform an open-air daylight basement into an ADA-compliant meeting space. Benewah County will build a new Fernwood library to replace an existing structure that is no longer functional.



Kellogg Public Library

The group learned how ICfL grants helped revamp the library's large-print collection and expand early literacy resources.

Osburn Public Library

The group learned of the Osburn City Council's recent decision to expand a library assistant's position to full time, opening new opportunities to add program offerings for all ages.



Wallace Public Library

The group learned the lore of the historic brick Carnegie Library building and discussed popular STEM programs.

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Coeur d'Alene Public Library

The group learned about digitization projects, discussed the popularity of storytimes, and visited the ever-changing children's area, which includes a cool new play space.



North Idaho College -- Molstead Library

The group saw library resources for students with children, toured the special collections room, and learned about the 1990s student art project that resulted in the many gargoyles adorning bookshelves.



ICfL Staff & Board of Library Commissioners

“The annual board tour is always a highlight of the year. We hadn’t been to the Silver Valley libraries in several years and it was great to connect with those directors again and see the good work they are doing,” State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White said. “The energy in St. Maries and the Fernwood branch of the Benewah County Library District due to the new construction funds was awesome. Staff and boards in those communities have waited a long time to make improvements to their buildings and I’m excited for them.”

Welcoming Libraries Grant Open thru Nov. 30

The ICfL's Welcoming Libraries Grant application is open through November 30. The \$1,000 grant is available to Idaho public, school, or tribal libraries working with children. For more, <https://libraries.idaho.gov/rtm/welcoming-libraries-grant/>.



Snapshot Day -- a Big Success

Thank you to the staff of the 27 libraries that participated in Snapshot Day in October. That's the highest level of participation in many years!

We'll communicate some of the results soon to give everyone a snapshot of what goes on in Idaho's libraries on a typical day.

Director 101 Cohort Applications Now Open

The ICfL's Director 101 program is designed to help new Idaho library directors as they navigate the roles and responsibilities of being a director. Applications are being accepted through **November 24** for the second Director 101 cohort. To apply, visit <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=Y3o7xW4tlk2HyZ9YP20cgYUjFur2WXpCs2INdCv2H99UMeg2TIBNWUIERDQwMTFBMkxUOVM0Wlc1NS4u>

If you have questions, contact Clay Ritter at clay.ritter@libraries.idaho.gov.

2023 Public Library Survey -- Due 1/1/24

The 2023 public library survey collection period is open. Every public library director was sent an email their their log on information and password for the Collect Connect portal. If you did not receive the email, contact Clay Ritter at clay.ritter@libraries.idaho.gov.

TBS Talk

The Idaho Talking Book Service (TBS) is the free, convenient audiobook library service for Idahoans who are visually impaired (or have another qualifying condition) that is administered by the ICfL.

Here's a story about TBS from the aunt of ICfL Public Library Consultant Clay Ritter about his grandfather, a new TBS patron. Clay said that his grandfather loves the service, and it is really brightening his mood, making him more active, and improving his memory. Clay's aunt said, "It was about 11:30, and I still hadn't heard or seen grandpa. I was getting really worried, so I knocked on the door. No answer. I knocked again; still no answer. So, I opened the door in complete fear, and he's fully dressed -- ready for the day -- sitting on the edge of the bed listening to his talking book. I think this is the best thing that's ever happened."

If you would like to have a TBS player to show potential patrons (or their caregiver), contact LeAnn Gelskey at LeAnn.Gelskey@libraries.idaho.gov.



Boardrooms and Bureaucrats

by ICfL Public Library Consultant Clay Ritter

At this year's Idaho Library Association (ILA) annual conference, we held a "boardrooms and bureaucrats" session that was standing room only. The ICfL staff who played the part of a trustee were Deana Brown, Annie Gaines, Tina Schilling, Jennifer Redford, and Rachel Welker. Three of my director 101 cohort volunteered to be director candidates -- thanks to Cresta Craner, Deleice Ward, and Kaylene Christensen.

Following is the agenda for our mock session.

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GOONDOCKS PUBLIC LIBRARY
PEMBERLEY, NEAR LAMBTON, DERBYSHIRE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
April 21, 2023

*John H. Watson, Trent Crim,
Eleanor Oliphant, Lucille Bluth, Annabeth Chase*

FEE INCREASE PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD AT 5:30PM WITH THE REGULAR MEETING TO FOLLOW

-
- Public Hearing Call to
 - Order Public Comment
 - Close Public Hearing

 - Call Regular Meeting to Order
 - Approval of Consent Agenda Items-**Action**
 - The Consent Agenda consists of the following: Meeting Agenda, Prior Meeting Minutes, Library Financial Report, Director's Report
 - Vouchers for Payment/Payment of Bills
 - Business-**NO Action**
 1. Friends of the Library Pancake Fundraiser– Director Wells
 2. Window Cleaning contract – Just Ken
 3. Automatic renewals discussion – Director Wells
 - Business- **Action Items**
 1. Appointment of New Director – Director Wells
 2. Estate Donation – John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith
 3. Community Room Policy Review – Director Wells
 4. Community Room Fee addition to Fee Schedule – Director Wells
 5. **Executive Session Pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206(a):**
 - (a) To consider hiring a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, wherein the respective qualities of individuals are to be evaluated in order to fill a particular vacancy or need. This paragraph does not apply to filling a vacancy in an elective office or deliberations about staffing needs in general;
 - Public Comment – *Comment will be limited to 3 minutes per speaker, time is not allowed to be passed on or ceded. A maximum of 10 minutes total will be allowed for comment at each meeting. The Board accepts written comments at any time, please refer to our website or the library front desk for a public comment form.*
 - Adjourn

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Before we started, I discussed room layout, by-laws, and how much meeting guidelines for the public, staff, and trustees matter very much at EVERY meeting. It is important to conduct meetings by following a solid set of rules -- this is not about power but about running the meeting efficiently and making sure that the professional business of managing the library is taken seriously.

At the start of our mock meeting, there was a public hearing about a fee increase. We talked about not making a decision during a public hearing as that is just a place for the public to be heard. We discussed that a fee increase of 5% or more, including the creation of a fee (since that is more than a 5% increase), always requires a public hearing. I recommend that libraries have a fee schedule as part of their policy manual, and that it gets edited whenever a new fee or adjustment takes place.

Next, the board was thrown for a loop -- the first discussion item was scheduled to be presented by the director, but the library did not have a director. This led to a discussion about the ordering of the agenda. While you cannot amend an agenda easily under Idaho Code and most specifically cannot ADD an action item during the meeting, topics can be moved around to accommodate the meeting since those items are already part of the agenda.

So, the board decided to move the appointment of a director up to the top of the agenda. After appointing a director (Kaylene), the meeting proceeded normally. We stopped there as the board had discussed the candidate's qualifications in executive session. We talked about how boards cannot make decisions inside of executive session, but they can discuss things and then (provided it is an action item on their agenda) take action on it outside of executive session.

We discussed some best practices concerning ethics, open meetings law, public records, and public comment. We also covered consent agendas and some of the best practices for making your board meetings more efficient and timelier. Lots of audience interaction was had, including an appearance from some public commentators such as Odin who thanked the library for ridding itself of frost giants, and an anonymous commentator who didn't want the library to carry any books by British authors because "Meghan Markle is a treasure!"

There were ups and downs and a lot of sympathetic groans from the crowd when one of our amazing board volunteers did something that was scripted for them to simulate a happening in real library meetings around the state.

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Boardrooms and Bureaucrats

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Top questions from our mock board meeting:

Q.
My board decided inside of executive session. How do we fix that?

A.
Open Meetings Law has a curing process. Contact your legal counsel and go through that process to make the decision in compliance with the law.

Q.
Public comment, what are some best practices?

A.
Make sure you have public comment guidelines. It is up to your board to enforce those. Make sure that the board is exercising meeting protocols, such as addressing the chair, to model good meeting behavior so the public knows how to give good feedback to the board. Even when no members of the public are at your meeting, you need to practice good behavior so that if a situation arises, the practice is a natural part of meeting protocol.

Q.
Should meeting notes and handwritten minutes be included in your records retention schedule?

A.
Yes, please include things like notes in your records retention schedules and make sure you have a solid procedure and policy surrounding the public records in the custody of your library.

If you have questions of your own, contact Clay Ritter at clay.ritter@libraries.idaho.gov.

